



PRESS RELEASE

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DOZENS OF REPTILES SEIZED IN THOUSAND OAKS

THOUSAND OAKS, Calif.— Dozens of exotic and venomous reptiles were seized yesterday during a multi-agency operation in which officials recovered species including several American Alligators, Gila Monsters, Mexican Beaded Lizards and numerous snakes from two locations. Venomous snakes seized included Gaboon Vipers, Puff Adders and various species of Cobra.

The County of Los Angeles Department of Animal Care and Control is currently working with permitted organizations to provide care and housing for the reptiles until their permanent disposition is determined.

The department is thankful to the Pasadena Humane Society, the San Diego Zoo and Safari Park, and the responding agencies for their assistance in this operation.

The department was assisted by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Ventura County Sheriff's Department, the Ventura County Department of Animal Services, the Ventura County District Attorney's Office, the Ventura County Fire Department, the City of Thousand Oaks and the Los Angeles Zoo and Botanical Garden.

The animal owner, Todd Kates, was arrested on multiple counts of suspected felony animal cruelty following service of the search warrant at his residence on Rancho Lane in Thousand Oaks yesterday.

A second search warrant was served at a rural address in unincorporated Ventura County where Kates maintained additional venomous snakes. A Restricted Species Exhibitor's Permit had been issued to Kates for that address by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.



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